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Wastewater Treatment Plant Bids Opened; Will Serve Cahokia

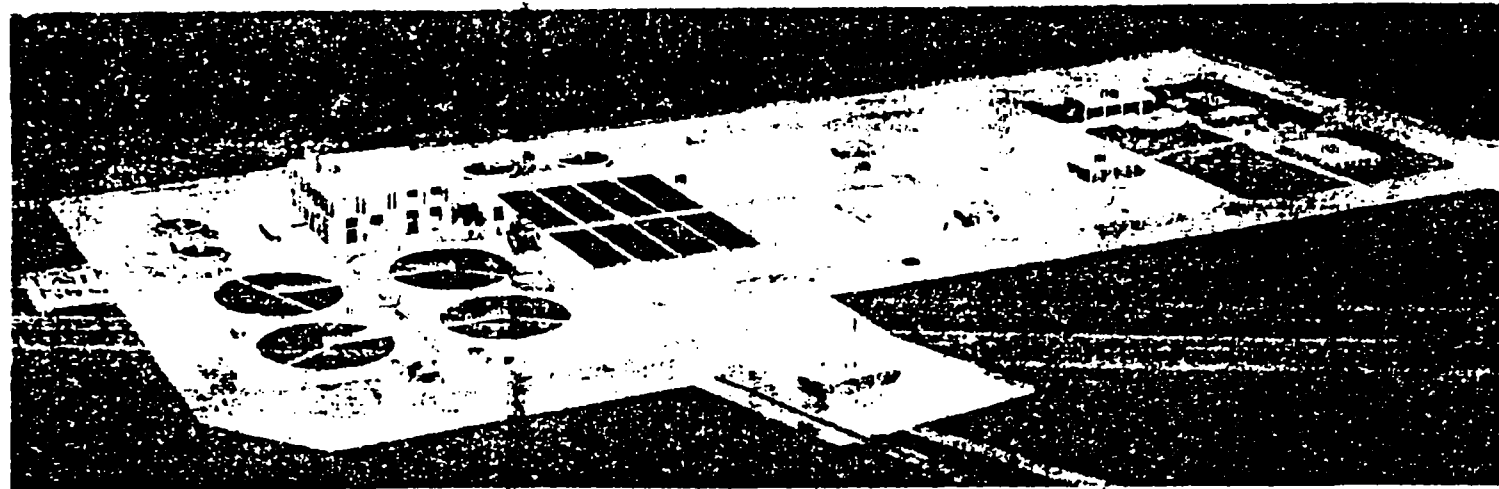
by Randy Pierce

Bids have been opened for the \$70 million American Bottoms Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility designed to serve homes, businesses and industries in Alorton, Centreville, Cahokia, Sauget and most of East St. Louis.

The project was bid in six different units, the first two of which make up the bulk of the cost. This involves the actual construction of a substantial part of the 27 million gallon per day plant near the site of the existing Sauget wastewater treatment plant. Combined with this in the bidding process is the renovation of a pump station at the site of the Cahokia wastewater treatment facility.

Bids for the project were opened on February 11 after having been postponed from late December and again in late January. A protest from a supplier has delayed the opening of one phase of the bids. That bid opening is planned for Thursday, March 11 according to John Zelle, project director. Zelle added that the other bids will not be awarded until this facet of the project has been straightened out in regard to a low bidder who, as necessary in all phases of the bidding, fulfills bonding requirements, minority business enterprise regulations and shows absolute compliance with specifications. All of this should take a couple of months, Zelle noted.

At the February 11 bid opening, the joint effort of two firms, Walbridge-Aldinger and Tarlton Construction Company of St. Louis, was apparently low with roughly \$34,850,500 for the plant construction and pump station renovation portion of the project. There were a total of eight bids submitted for this work, the highest being \$43,996,000. Other bidders were S.M. Wilson of Granite City, Envirocon, a division of Fruin-Colson, Paul Lawrence Company of Minneapolis, R.E. Dailey of Detroit combined with J.V. Helmkamp of Wood River, Newberg-Hinderson,



The American Bottoms Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility. The process is shown, with the primary settling tanks at far lower left, (1); the primary gravity thickening, at top left (2); the grit removal in the middle of the settling tanks, the sludge/blower building (3) above that, a screw pump station (4) to the immediate right, the secondary gravity thickening (5) to the right of the building, aeration tanks

(6) below, a disinfection building (7) in the forefront, secondary settling (8) above and to the right, a service water building (9) further right, a storage building (10) above and to the right, a maintenance building (11) again to the right and the administration building (12) below and to the far right.

(Photo courtesy of the Southern Illinois Builders Association)

Alberici-Rollo of St. Louis and McCarthy Brothers of St. Louis.

Another phase of the bidding in which an apparent low bidder, Helmkamp Construction of Wood River with a price of \$594,683, was determined on February 11 concerns the construction of a force main connecting the new treatment plant to the renovated pump station.

Also involved in the project will be the construction of a new pump station at the site of the present East St. Louis wastewater treatment plant. Helmkamp was apparent low bidder here with a price of \$2,915,000.

The next unit of the bids is that part which will be opened on March 11. This calls for the construction of a force main from the East St. Louis pump station to the main plant facility.

The Helmkamp firm is the apparent low bidder, with a price of about \$8,717,300, for the construction of a new pump station to be located at near the present site of the Sauget treatment facility along with an outfall sewer to Mississippi River, also included in this part of the project.

Plans and specifications for the project were prepared by Russell and Axon Engineers, Planners, Architects, Inc. of St. Louis.

The project was made possible through a grant of \$59.5 million from the United States Environmental Protection Agency, procured, according to the Southern Illinois Builders Association, through the efforts of Frank Basile Jr., an executive of Monsanto Corporation who was on loan from that firm to represent Sauget, and William Sago, vice-president of Russell and Axon. Basile is no longer with the project, having given his duties over to Zelle.

The notification to Sauget of the USEPA grant award came on June 30 of last year. The 25 percent local share to absorb the costs over and above the grant will be obtained primarily through the issuance of revenue bonds.

As a result of this project, primary treatment plants in Cahokia and East St. Louis will be eliminated. The Cahokia Metro-East Sanitary District plant's functioning was impeded by the financial insolvency of the district. The

20-inch diameter force main from the new Cahokia pump station will carry wastewater over three miles to the treatment site.

The process is expected to handle 27 million gallons of wastewater per day through a unique process in which powdered activated carbon is regenerated, reducing the sludge and converting the material in a black sand-like substance.

The regionalization concept was developed in 1971 as a means of constructing an EPA-mandated secondary facility rather than building new treatment plants for Cahokia, Sauget and East St. Louis, thus putting up one plant at lesser cost.

Construction is expected to take from 33 to 35 months. Then a one-year period would begin during which start-up of the plant through training of employees and refinements to the system would take place before full operations begin.

(Our thanks to the Southern Illinois Builders Association for its assistance in providing some information used here)